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SUBJECT: MINISTRY OF INTERIOR'S SECRET PLAN FOR MOROCCO'S  
2007 LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS

11. (U) Summary: French language weekly, Le Journal Hebdomaire (July 15), reported on the Moroccan Ministry of Interior (MOI)'s projections on the 2007 legislative elections. The projections confirmed the preeminence of the Islamist Party of Justice and Development (PJD), the strong position of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP) and Istiqlal and also mentioned possible formations of leftist parties to balance Islamist power. According to Le Journal, the Government of Morocco (GOM) seeks a balance between powers that will encourage the democratization of institutions but not challenge the Monarchy's authority. It describes PJD difficulties in rural areas and the isolation of the USFP on the issue of the electoral code reform. Le Journal criticized the GOM for releasing a plan to "drive the elections" rather than an objective description of the current political configuration. End Summary.

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THE GOM IN THE 2007 LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS  
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12. (U) The Ministry of the Interior (MOI) conducted polling and simulations in order to gauge where parties stand in the current political configuration. The MOI findings estimated that the PJD could win between 60 and 70 seats; USFP could win approximately 50 seats; Istiqlal approximately 40 seats; and the Popular Movement Party (UMP) and National Rally of Independents (RNI) could win between 30 and 40 seats each. The Party of Progress and Socialism (PPS) could increase its position to a little over 20 seats.

13. (U) Le Journal said that the 2002 legislative elections failed to present a clear majority and forced the King to nominate a politically independent prime minister. The weekly asserted that, with a changed political landscape, the King intends to nominate a partisan prime minister in 2007 and that the MOI's polling and simulations are laying the groundwork for this decision. An unnamed official of the MOI said it was not intervening in the elections but merely conducting a study in order to predict the results; however, Le Journal criticized the MOI for attempting to "orient" the results of the elections.

14. (U) According to the report, the GOM seeks to avoid the massive victory of one party or the formation of a homogeneous coalition that would not need the Palace's support and thereby weaken its authority. The GOM also seeks a party committed to democratization without questioning the Monarchy. The GOM's main goal is to create a balance between

the parties which will last beyond the 2007 elections.

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ISLAMISTS  
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15. (U) The GOM's strategy regarding the Islamists and the PJD is to maintain the 2002 electoral lists and distribution of constituencies. The report notes that the votes of Moroccan residents abroad will continue to be discarded so as to limit Islamists' power. Le Journal claims that the PJD would have trouble gaining votes in rural areas if the electoral code is passed but also acknowledges that the 14 parties unfavorable to the code might then seek support from the PJD. The MOI report maintained that the best defense against conservative Islam is an active opposition with innovative ideas presented by credible people. The "Left," according to Le Journal, holds the best keys for institutional democratization but could also threaten the Palace's authority.

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THE LEFT  
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16. (U) Le Journal claims that the proposed electoral code reform will most likely be amended in order to allow for the participation of the Unified Socialist Party (PSU), whose absence in the elections would discredit the code. The MOI official was allegedly vague regarding questions about the PSU but did acknowledge that the progressive party would win seats by associating itself with other parties from the radical Left. The MOI predicts the institutionalization of the PSU and other parties of the Moroccan Left into a united

opposition integrated into Parliament after 2007, according to Le Journal.

17. (U) This united Left also depends on whether the USFP will cooperate or pursue "hegemonic ambitions." It predicted that the USFP under its current Secretary General, Mohamed Elyazghi, is unlikely to form a coalition with the PSU or other parties from the Left. Le Journal wrote that the MOI is not pleased with the isolation of the USFP regarding its support for the electoral code reform unanimously contested by other parties. Le Journal suggested the GOM's interest in the changes in the Left was a way to appease critics and to find a counterbalance to Islamist parties.

18. (U) The MOI report also recognized the increasing importance of the PPS. It acknowledged the importance of political bureau member Nabil Benabdallah, the Minister of Communication and government spokesperson, who could demand constitutional reforms from friends if the PPS has electoral difficulties similar to those of the PSU.

19. (U) According to Le Journal, a PPS with 20 to 25 seats in the future Chamber of Representatives would be ideal for the MOI as it would calm USFP demands for constitutional reforms.

The MOI also hopes the PSU would have around 14 deputies so that it would be coherent enough to form an active opposition in Parliament and balance the PJD discourse but small enough so that its reformist discourse would resonate minimally. Le Journal reported that there has been recent communication between the MOI and certain PSU leaders. The Minister Delegate to the Ministry of the Interior, Fouad Ali El Himma, made it known that he expected increased PSU participation in Parliament, which he claimed would benefit political institutions in Morocco.

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